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RR RUEHBZ RUEHDU RUEHJO RUEHRN
DE RUEHMR #0224 1890807
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 080807Z JUL 09
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4255
INFO RUCNSAD/SADC COLLECTIVE
RUEHMR/AMEMBASSY MASERU 4684

UNCLAS MASERU 000224

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/S
PRETORIA FOR DATT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV LT
SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT: SOUTH AFRICA ACKNOWLEDGES EXTRADITION REQUEST RECEIVED

REF: Maseru 222

¶1. (SBU) National Security Service (NSS) and Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) sources notified post that on July 7, Makotoko Lerotholi attended a court hearing in Pretoria related to Lesotho's request to extradite him to stand trial in relation to the April 22 assassination attempt on the Prime Minister. At this hearing, the judge postponed his case until August 25, 2009, to allow Lerotholi's lawyers time to review the documents submitted to support the extradition request. The GOL stated in the request that Lerotholi will be charged with two counts of attempted murder.

¶2. (SBU) The NSS and LMPS also stated that despite their repeated requests to the South African Police Service (SAPS), they were not allowed to interview Lerotholi while he was in police custody. According to them, Jesse Ramakatane, alleged mastermind of the attack on the Prime Minister, remains at large, as the SAPS is unable to locate him.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: The earlier confusion over whether the GOL had requested Lerotholi's extradition (reftel) may have simply been a miscommunication between the various elements of the SAG. However, the conflict between the GOL and the local South African High Commissioner on this issue is likely to only increase the tension in the relationship between the GOL and the SAG.

POWER